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RUEHEK/AMEMBASSY BISHKEK PRIORITY 3577  
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RUEHTA/AMEMBASSY ALMATY PRIORITY 9385  
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE PRIORITY 8521  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 05 ISLAMABAD 007164

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TAGS: [PK](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#)

SUBJECT: A PRIMER ON PAKISTAN'S FEDERALLY ADMINISTERED  
TRIBAL AREAS (FATA)

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Classified By: Ambassador Ryan C. Crocker, DSCG 05-01,  
January 2005, Edition 1, Reason: 1.4 (B,D)

11. Summary. This cable is intended to serve as a basic primer on Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). The seven tribal agencies that make up the FATA are administratively, legally, and politically distinct from the rest of Pakistan. This primer focuses on these unique features of FATA, beginning with an updated snapshot of each Agency. Subsequent reporting in this series (septel) will feature in-depth looks at the political, military and development challenges and opportunities in this region. End Summary.

#### A SNAPSHOT OF EACH AGENCY

##### BAJAUR

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Area: 1553 square kilometers  
Approximate Population (2005 est): 597,000  
Major tribes: Tarklani, Utman Khel, Safi  
Sub-tribes: Tarklani: Mamunds, Isozai, Ismailzai  
Utman Khel: Umar Khel, Asil Barang Khel, Gar Shamoza  
Federal Level Representation: 2 MNAs  
Key Leaders: Fahim Khan Wazir (Political Agent), Lal Karim (politically active businessman) Bismullah Khan (politically active businessman), Maulvi Mohammed Sadiq (influential religious leader, JUI-F politician), Maulana Khalilur Rehman (influential religious leader, JUI-F politician), Sahibzada Haroon Rasheed (JI activist and businessman)  
Average Literacy Rate\*: (1998): 30% (male) 3% (female)  
Average Primary school enrollment\* (2003): 68% (male) 12% (female)  
Economic potential: Emeralds, gypsum, small deposits of marble.  
Economic base: farming (potatoes, onions, tomatoes)  
USAID Development Projects: school construction,

micro-credit, healthcare

\* Agency-specific figures unavailable. Average for FATA used.

#### MOHMAND

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Area: 2,296 square kilometers

Approximate population (2005 est): 348,643

Major Tribe: Mohmand

Sub-tribes: Musakhel, Tarakzai, Safi, UtmanKhel, Halimzai, Bhurhan Khel, Dawezai, Isa Khel

Federal level political Representation: 2 MNAs

Key Leaders: Dr. Jamal Nasir (Political Agent), Baroz Khan (former Parliamentarian, wealthy businessman), Abdur Rehman (former Parliamentarian, wealthy businessman)

Average Literacy Rate\*: (1998): 30% (male) 3% (female)

Average Primary school enrollment\* (2003): 68% (male) 12% (female)

Economic potential: significant untapped marble deposits

USAID Development Projects: school construction, water and sanitation, micro-credit, and healthcare

\* Agency-specific figures unavailable. Average for FATA used.

#### KHYBER

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Area: 2,576 square kilometers

Approximate population (2005 est): 742,501

Major Tribes: Afridi, Mullagori, Shinwari, Shilmani

Sub tribes: Afridi: Qambar Khel, Malikdin Khel, Kuik

Khel, Aka Khel, Zakha Khel, Sepa Khel, Kamar Khel, Adam Khel

Shinwari: Ali Sher (in the Landi Kotal area)

Federal level political representation: 2 MNAs, 2 Senators

Key Leaders: Fida Khan Wazir (Political Agent), Hafiz Abdul

Malik Qadri & Noorul Haq Qadri (Religious leaders and

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parliamentarians), Latif Afridi (ANP politician influential in Jamrud and Bajaur), Engineer Noor Alam Afridi (son of drug baron Ayub Afridi, Hameedullah Jan Afridi (Senator)

Average Literacy Rate\*: (1998): 30% (male) 3% (female)

Average Primary school enrollment\* (2003): 68% (male) 12% (female)

Economic base: transit trade, smuggling, arms manufacturing

USAID Development Projects: school construction, teacher education scholarships, water and sanitation, micro-credit (underway), and healthcare

\* Agency-specific figures unavailable. Average for FATA used.

#### ORAKZAI

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Area:

Population (2005 est): 276,792

Major Tribe: Orakzai

Sub-tribes: Orakzai tribes are divided on Sunni-Shia sectarian lines. Three Tehsils--Upper Tehsil, Central Tehsil, and IsmailZai Tehsil are Sunni. Lower Tehsil is a mix of Sunni and Shia.

Federal Level political representation: 2 MNAs, 2 Senators

Key Leaders: Sher Alam Mehsud (Political Agent), Dr. Sayed Ghazi Gulab Jamal (Federal Minister of Tourism, scion of a military family), Said Munir Mian (influential in religious circles), Syed Muhammad Hussain (Senator)

Literacy Rate: (1998): 19.6 (male) 1.28 (female)

Primary school Enrollment (2003): 58% (male) 13.6% (female)

Middle School Enrollment (2003): 14.2% (male) 1.6% (female)

Economic base: agriculture (fruit trees, rice, and barley)

USAID Projects: school construction, micro-credit, and healthcare

#### KHURRAM

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Area: 1500 square kilometers

Population (2005 est): 545,415

Major Tribes: Chamkani, Masuzai, Alisherzai, Zaimukh, Turi,

and Bangash

Federal Level Political Representation: 2 MNAs, 2 Senators  
Key Leaders: Salim Khan Mohmand (Political Agent), Haji Muni Orakzai (popular politician and wealthy businessman), Syed Sajjid Hussain Mia (popular Shia community leader with close ties to Iran), Rashid Ahmed Khan (Senator)  
Literacy Rate: (1998): 33% (male) 4.5% (female)  
Primary school Enrollment (2003): 75% (male) 23% (female)  
Middle School Enrollment (2003): 23.2% (male) 6% (female)  
Economic base: rice, apple and grape orchards  
USAID Projects: School construction (13 schools under construction), micro-credit (underway), healthcare

#### North Waziristan

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Area: 4,707  
Population (2005 est): 438,770  
Major Tribes: Wazir, Daur  
Sub tribe: Wazir: Utmanzai  
Tribes by area: Wazir--primarily in Ramzak, Datta khel, and Shawal  
Daur--primarily in Miram Shah, Mir Ali, Edak, Humaz, and Hasukhel  
Federal Level Political Representation: 2 MNAs, 2 Senators  
Key Leaders: Zaheerul Islam (Political Agent), Maulana Deendar (MNA and very influential religious leader closely associated with JUI-F), Maulvi Nek Zaman (MNA, influential religious leader)  
Average Literacy Rate\*: (1998): 30% (male) 3% (female)  
Average Primary school enrollment\* (2003): 68% (male) 12% (female)  
Economic base: largely barren, economy is mostly smuggling-based  
USAID Projects: School construction (delayed due to security), micro-credit, healthcare

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\* Agency-specific figures unavailable. Average for FATA used.

#### South Waziristan

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Area: 6,220 square kilometers  
Population (2005 est): 501,655  
Major tribes: Wazir, Mahsud  
Subtribe: Wazir: Ahmedzai,  
Federal Level Political Representation: 2 MNAs, 0 Senators  
Key Leaders: Munir Alam, (Political Agent), Alam Jan Mehsud (retired General and father of the Orakzai Political Agent), Maulana Noor Mohammed Wazir (JUI-F politician with reported links to Taliban and Al Qaida), Muhammad Meraj-ud Din (JUI-F politician with reported links to Taliban and Al Qaida), Mateen Shah (ex-Senator, wealthy businessman)  
Literacy Rate: (1998): 32.5% (male) 2.57% (female)  
Primary school Enrollment (2003): 46% (male) 6% (female)  
Middle School Enrollment (2003): 6.1% (male) .04% (female)  
Economic base: timber and trucking

#### Administrative Hodgepodge

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13. (C//NF) The FATA is divided into seven administrative territories, or "Agencies": Mohmand, Khyber, Orakzai, Khurram, North Waziristan and South Waziristan. As a region, it lies outside of the elected, legal, and administrative bounds that govern each of the four provinces of Pakistan. Technically a federal territory, it is supposed to be governed by the Federal Ministry for States and Frontiers (SAFRON). The SAFRON Ministry's charter charges it with directing all federal interaction with the FATA, asserting administrative and political control, and overseeing development plans and policy directives. In reality, chronic indifference and a lack of control at the SAFRON ministry has resulted in the shift of FATA responsibilities to a labyrinth of federal, provincial (NWFP) and local actors that seek to assert influence over FATA; none has effective or complete control.

¶4. (C//NF) Provincially, the FATA is currently administered by the NWFP Governor and his "FATA Secretariat". The NWFP Governor has the power to oversee all administrative, legal, and economic decisions made for FATA. In 2002, former NWFP Governor Ifthikar Shah established the FATA Secretariat to consolidate the political and development functions disbursed through several provincial cabinet ministries. It was also created as a follow-on to the now defunct FATA development cooperation, which was seen as corrupt and inefficient. When Governor Khalilur Rehman took office in March 2005, he strengthened the administrative powers of the FATA Secretariat, envisioning it as a place to coordinate and

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implement long-term development plans, and ensure accountability in the Political Agents' running of each Agency. Governor Rehman announced that his goal was to break the control of drug mafias, warlords and what he referred to in 2004 as the "stranglehold" of the mullahs by improving educational opportunities, increasing funding for development, winning over warlords, and eliminating FATA's isolation. Actual implementation of this plan has been faulty, as the Governor's control has been weak, and the Secretariat has been mired in bureaucracy and in all

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likelihood, corruption.

¶5. (U) Administrative and judicial powers are carried out by a mid-level bureaucrat from the GOP's District Management group, the Political Agent (PA), and several Deputy PAs. Under the administrative system created by the British colonial government, each PA was appointed federally and approved by the NWFP governor. His key role was to ensure tribal loyalty to the government, prevent intra- and inter-tribal disputes, and dole out provincial and federal funding to tribal chiefs as he saw fit. PAs hold the powers of Magistrate, Sessions Judge, and implementing agent for

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Federal Government Orders. Traditionally, PAs have relied on the good-will and assistance of Tribal Chiefs, which they often bought with bribes and offers of greater funds for the tribe. PAs also needed assistance from the levy and Khasdar (militia) forces in their Agency to administer law and order.

Over time, the influence of PAs over tribes has waned and they have been seen as corrupt and out-of-step with tribal interests. Tribes often put more stock into decisions made by a jirga (a tribal council of elders empowered with decision-making and negotiating authority by a tribe or the Agency population) or their increasingly influential religious leaders than the decisions and threats made by Political Agents. The financial leverage Political Agents hold over tribes may also hold less sway today than it once did, largely due to the income provided by smuggling and other illicit activities.

Legal Muddle

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¶6. (U) Constitutionally, laws passed by the GOP do not apply in FATA. FATA residents cannot seek legal redress in either NWFP's provincial courts or the federal judiciary because neither has jurisdiction there. The GOP's "Criminal Procedure Code," which underpins the foundation of Criminal Law in Pakistan does not fully apply in FATA and is often supplanted by Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR), an arcane code of laws that relies on the principle of collective punishment to prevent (and punish) crimes ranging from banditry and crime to harboring fugitives and being "unfriendly to the government". Punishments include: arresting family members of perpetrators, demolishing houses or villages found in violation of codes, levying fines on households or imposing economic blockades. For example, houses found to harbor fugitives can be demolished after one warning. FCR does not allow the right to appeal sentences or

judgments at the High Court or Supreme Court level.

¶7. (U) When the Political Agent (or tribe) chooses, civil and criminal disputes can be solved by a jirga--a council of elders. According to the FCR, the Political Agent can choose to depute the powers of magistrate to a council of elders, when either of the parties in a dispute belongs to a frontier tribe, or, when the crime is likely to cause a blood feud. The jirga implements decisions either based on Pakhtunwali tribal code, Sharia, or a combination thereof. Decisions by the jirga are final and cannot be appealed. Jirgas are also used to settle inter-tribal disputes and disputes between the government and a tribe (or individual).

#### Stone-Age Development

¶8. (SBU) In terms of social, economic and political development, the FATA and its neighboring Provincially Administered Tribal Areas are the least developed regions in Pakistan. According to the 1998 census, less than 18 percent of the population is literate (compared to a national average of 48 percent), and less than 20 percent of males and 6 percent of females (on average) make it past primary school. Access to health care (1 bed per 1450 people and 1 doctor for 1529 patients), clean water, sanitation, electricity and irrigation is also abysmal, putting parts of FATA figuratively and realistically "back in the stone age."

¶9. (SBU) Political development in the FATA has traditionally been rooted in a tribal culture of collective decision-making by un-elected maliks. Political party activity is banned in the region, though representatives of the religio-political party, Jamaat-e Ulema-e Islam Fazlur Rehman (JUI-F), have a base in tribal politics because many mosque-leaders are members of the party and disseminate the party line at weekly prayer services. In 1996, former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto introduced elections in the FATA by calling for the election of eight tribal Ministers of the National Assembly (MNAs). Prior to this election, tribal elders represented

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each agency. In 1997, MNAs were chosen by universal adult franchise. In 2002, the election resulted in the election of 12 nominally-independent MNAs and 8 nominally independent Senators (most vote in line with the JUI-F and the Islamist MMA alliance). The government uses statistics (such as the lower-than-average voter turnout (approximately 45% in 2002) and the negligible turnout of women) to argue that the tribal system in FATA does not allow for "one man, one vote" style elections, an argument it continues to posit today to explain the dearth of political party activity in the FATA.

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